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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

José de Gálvez, Visitor-General of New Spain, 1765-1771, by Herbert Ingraham Priestley. University of California Publications in History, H. Morse Stephens and Herbert E. Bolton, Editors. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1916. Pp. xi, 449.

Aside from being an account of the inspection (*visita*) of New Spain and her northern provinces by José de Gálvez from 1765 to 1771, Mr. Priestley's book is a veritable encyclopedia of Spanish colonial administration. It is quite the most substantial and massive thing that has been done in this subject up to the present, and is made possible by the unrivaled facilities which the University of California enjoys for the utilization of the documents existing in Spain, not only in the local field but in the larger and more closely related one of Spanish colonial history. Although the activities of Gálvez as described in this volume are chiefly concerned with New Spain and its northern frontier provinces, the institutions and practices which are described so clearly and in such an interesting manner were characteristic of the entire colonial empire of Spain from Peru to California, and will be of interest to all students of Latin-American history and government in Spain, Mexico and South America, as well as in the United States. This book is of such merit, and of such consequence are the problems which it discusses, that the volume should be translated into Spanish for the more general convenience of our Spanish-speaking contemporaries.

Although the main contribution of the work is to be found from Chapters IV to IX, inclusive, for therein the visitation itself is described from documentary sources hitherto unused, the first three chapters, as well as the last, are of great value to the all-too-often confused student of Spanish colonial institutions. In his *Introduction*, Mr. Priestley gives his work a quality of completeness by sketching the life of Gálvez, supplying the earlier and later details of his career which are not identified with his six years of service in New Spain.

The first three chapters serve as introductory to the general

subject of the visitation. The first gives a general survey of the Spanish empire at the time of the Bourbons, illustrating the need of reform, financial and administrative, resulting from the rack and ruin inflicted by the incompetence and extravagance of the Hapsburgs. This is concerned with the leading motive of the visitation: to bring about more efficiency of administration and more revenue. This chapter contains some very useful data compiled from a report of the *Junta Comercial* in 1765 on the weakness of the commercial system, with suggestions for reform. In his second chapter Mr. Priestley gives a summary view of the government of New Spain and its relation to and administration from Spain. This chapter is, in effect, a well-connected series of definitions, accompanied by brief historical summaries, of the political, judicial, ecclesiastical, economic and financial institutions of New Spain. The third chapter furnishes a history of the institution and practice of the visitation, showing its origin in Spain and its subsequent employment in New Spain from 1526 onward. In these first three chapters original sources are generously used whenever available, but it may be noted that the author, like other modern writers and students of Spanish colonial history, has felt justified in making frequent use of the works of H. H. Bancroft and Arthur Helps.

It is really in the five following chapters that the real contribution is made, utilizing chiefly the documents recently obtained from Spain. So well have these sources been used that in no part of this section can the criticism of overdocumentation be made (and seldom is it made except by those who are unable or indisposed to make use of original documents). The treatment of the tobacco monopoly and its administration is original. We note also as typical the struggles which arose between a viceroy, who did not wish to be disturbed in his pleasant and profitable state of isolation, and a zealous reformer, keen to bring the government to the highest point of efficiency. This is an old story in Spain's colonies. In the same manner we are instructed by the data furnished us on the administration of the customs at Vera Cruz, the amount of smuggling done not only by foreigners but by the faithful subjects of the king of Spain. Here we see in full swing the official corruption which was the ruination of

the Spanish colonial empire and is still the curse of Spanish government.

Three chapters deal with phases of the frontier problem. The sixth shows that Gálvez played an important part "in planning and executing the coup" connected with the expulsion of the Jesuits. In describing the revolutions and revolts which followed and the reign of terror initiated by Gálvez, Mr. Priestley admits that his hero had many defects, and among them were over-severity and mercilessness. The seventh chapter describes Gálvez's efforts to pacify the Indians and to bring about the settlement of the northern frontier. In connection with the California expedition of 1769, it is refreshing to note the absence of the customary beatification of Fr. Junipero Serra. Mr. Priestley credits Gálvez with being the initiator of this plan to guarantee and insure the security of the northern frontier, and he summarizes this topic with the assertion that California constitutes a lasting monument to Gálvez in the western hemisphere. The next chapter discusses the Indian problem further and particularly the Sonora expedition. Gálvez is compelled to leave his work incomplete because of illness and insanity. A brief outline of the plan of intendancies as worked out by Gálvez follows, together with a description of the *comandancia general*. In the ninth, and the concluding chapter dealing with the visitation occurs an account of Gálvez's efforts to reform the customs at Acapulco, and the story ends with the return of the visitor to Spain. Throughout the volume we may note that Gálvez was not given a free hand in his work in New Spain; obstacles were continually placed in his way by the reactionary element in Mexico and in Spain, and among the latter may be included the highest officials of the government. The besetting evil which was continually gnawing at the vitals of the whole colonial system was graft, and in this participated officials of high and low estate: those who enjoyed the confidence of the government as well as those who were under suspicion.

The last chapter, and for the purposes of the student of Spanish colonization probably the most useful, is a compendium of colonial finance, covering the period immediately preceding as well as following the visitation of Gálvez. We are shown the

amount and extent of the revenue derived from precious metals down to 1789, and the author has indeed performed a service in placing this data before us in readable and accessible form, although it is to be noted that he is indebted to the admirable work of Fonseca y Urrutia for much of the matter presented. The perplexing matter of tribute is dealt with, salable offices, *medias anatas*, excises, tithes, and, indeed, thirty different forms of colonial revenue are described.

The book is well edited. It contains an adequate bibliography of manuscript and printed sources and an appendix, giving a translation of the most important original document used in the book: the instructions issued to Gálvez by the Spanish monarch in 1765. The book contains six maps and two illustrations. Notable among the former is a Jesuit Map of California of 1757, and a map of the proposed Intendancy of California of 1770.

CHARLES H. CUNNINGHAM.

The first number of the *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* contains translations by Mr. Gilbert Pemberton of two rare pamphlets in the library of Mr. Gaspar Cusachs, president of the Louisiana Historical Society: *Informe que se dio al Exmo. Sr. Presidente de la Republica Mejicana, sobre limites de la Provincia de Tejas, con la de la Luisiana*, prepared by Fr. José Maria de Jesus Puelles of the College of our Lady of Guadalupe, Zacatecas, November 30, 1827, and *Diario de las operaciones de la expedicion contra la Plaza de Panzacola concluida por las Armas de S. M. Católica, baxo las ordenes del Mariscal de Campo D. Bernado de Galvez*, October 16, 1780, to May 11, 1781.

The *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, III, 61-69 and 134-162, prints a number of letters from A. J. Donelson, James K. Polk, Andrew Jackson, Sam Houston, and others, which deal with the question of annexation of Texas to the United States, 1844-45.

Horace B. Little describes the prison camp at Tyler, Texas, containing five or six thousand Federal prisoners, as it appeared

about April, 1864, and gives an account of his escape in August of that year in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XIII, 42-55.

The Texas History Teachers' Bulletin, V, No. 3 (May 15, 1917), prints from the originals in the Austin Papers three letters written by Stephen F. Austin that illustrate some of the difficulties he as empresario experienced in dealing with his colonists. The letters are dated April 4 and 7, 1829, and April 16, 1830. An index to Volumes I-V of the *Texas History Teachers' Bulletin* is printed in this number.

A brief article on the Bohemians in Texas, by Rev. Kenneth D. Miller, appeared in the *Bohemian Review*, May, 1917. It was republished by the *Austin Statesman*, May 23, 1917.

Under the title "Looking About," A. E. Winship tells in the *Journal of Education*, May 24, 1917, what he saw of schools, teachers, irrigation, business and enterprises in the Brownsville country during a visit in March of this year.

What was done in the line of historical work in Texas and the adjoining States during 1916 is set forth in an article by Donald L. McMurry, entitled "Recent historical activities in the South and Trans-Mississippi Southwest" and published in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, III, 478-512.

The John P. Branch Historical Papers of Randolph-Macon College, IV, 373-84, contain a series of letters from Thomas Ritchie, editor of the Richmond *Enquirer*, to Thomas Green, dated in 1836, 1837, and 1841, which deal with the desirability of annexing Texas to the United States.

The Brenham *Banner-Press*, on September 12, 1917, issued an Industrial Edition of forty-eight pages. The usual write-ups of the industries and commercial, social, religious and educational activities of the town are accompanied by two reprints of considerable historical value. An account of the New Mexico Campaign of 1861, by Mr. W. T. Wroe, is copied from the *La Grange Journal*. The Centennial Address of Dr. Wm. Carey Crane, delivered at Brenham, July 4, 1876, is reprinted from a pamphlet that is now rare. The address contains much local history. It is to be issued in pamphlet form.